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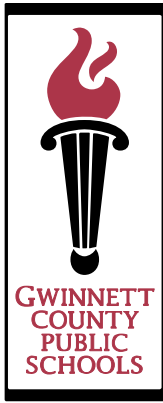
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: August 12, 2014
<u>Contact:</u> *Communication and Media Relations, 678-301-6020*

GCPS and Gwinnett County will hold a demonstration of the emergency notification system at the Gwinnett County 9-1-1 center, located at 770 Hi-Hope Road in Lawrenceville on Thursday, August 13 at 11 a.m.

Gwinnett County and local schools partner to expand safety initiatives in schools

In November of 2013, Gwinnett voters approved as part of the one-cent SPLOST the use of public safety funds from the 2014 SPLOST program to upgrade the public safety emergency notification system for public schools in the county (Gwinnett County Public Schools and Buford City Schools). Specifically, this 2014 SPLOST project called for the installation of an emergency notification system in schools. Gwinnett County Public Schools has partnered with the county to install this system in all schools, as well as a new visitor management system for all elementary and middle schools. Last school year, four elementary schools piloted the systems. Based on that successful pilot, additional schools are coming online this school year. The emergency notification system is being installed in all Gwinnett County public schools (GCPS and Buford City Schools) and the visitor management system is being installed in all GCPS elementary and middle schools and Buford City's four schools.

"Safety has been and continues to be a top priority for our schools," says **Chief Wayne Rikard** of Gwinnett County Public Schools. "We have a strong relationship with Gwinnett County police and a shared commitment when it comes to public safety. The safety initiatives included in the 2014 SPLOST Program, coupled with the work underway in the school district, will help ensure a safe learning environment for our students."

"This emergency notification system, which is funded through the 2014 SPLOST Program, creates a direct link from each public school to our 911 Center," says **Gwinnett County Police Chief Butch Ayers**. "In case of an emergency at a school, communications officers in the 911 Center can quickly dispatch law enforcement and public safety personnel as well as provide critical information to those first responders. This project demonstrates our commitment and partnership with Gwinnett County Public Schools and Buford City Schools to ensure the safety of students and employees in the schools."

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The Emergency Notification System: How does it work?

The emergency notification system is activated by school personnel in the event of an active threat. It eliminates the need to place a 911 call in this type of an emergency. Instead, an automatic alert system sends a signal directly to the Gwinnett County 911 Center at the push of a button. In addition, the new system allows for video to be sent and received to the 911 call center, providing responders from Gwinnett County Police, Gwinnett's city police departments, and Gwinnett Fire and Emergency Services with real-time information as they respond to situations in Gwinnett County schools. This information also is sent to school police headquarters.

The Visitor Management System: How does it work?

The visitor management system calls for greater door control at the primary entrances to the school. Once the school day begins, school doors will be locked and visitors will need to press a button on a control panel to gain entry to the school. The control panel includes a video camera that allows staff inside the school to see who is at the door. Upon entering the school, visitors will follow the normal visitor procedures, signing in and showing identification to receive a visitor's badge.

For more information, contact Sloan Roach, GCPS executive director of Communication and Media Relations, at 678-301-6020 or Gwinnett County Police PIO at 770-513-5209.

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